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A Song Of Friendship



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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

A

Song of Friendship.

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH

OF

CHARLES SCHEFFER.

James M. Baker a

To that high Capitol, where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,
He came, and bought with price of purest breath
A grave among the eternal.—*Shelley.*

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DEDICATION.

TO THE

Memory of my Wife

THIS SONG OF FRIENDSHIP IS INSCRIBED.

To thee, bright Captive of the sky,
To thee these lines belong :
Full oft I waft to thee a sigh,
And now ascends my song.

When first we met, there in our eyes
One path before us lay ;
We trod its turf, till to the skies
Your feet were turned away.

You took that light which made us glad,
That heart which we adore ;
And yet the loss which made us sad,
Illumin'd Heaven more.

How sweet through years our mercies came ?

How sweet their mem'ry now !

Through all those years, thy heart the same,—

Its one recorded vow.

That light which warm'd in other days,

That light, it still appears :

My soul drinks deep its golden rays,—

The wine of early years.

Fair as the fabled asphodel,

Our home, and you its Eve :

Dear as her love, yours did excel,

Without her will to grieve.

If ere I stray while yet I live,

Forgive what seems to be :

The brightest vision life can give,

Is yet my thought of thee.

Perchance not wise I've struggl'd on,

The measure of my years :

But who can tell the best we've done

Till all our life appears ?

Down from the bosom of the skies,
Blow gentle airs to me :
Some tender thoughts from Paradise,
Out from your star-lit sea.

Thou wilt not scorn in Morning land,
This gift to him I bring :
For he was one of Truth's bright band,—
This heart for which I sing.

The knights are gone, yet here one died
Who held their sceptre true ;
You mingle now, for truth's allied,—
My songlet is for two.

Shod with the sandals of the Morn,
She cross'd the blooming sky,
And on the hills where love was born,
She rests her feet for aye.

Vein well with fire these lided eyes,
O Lord ! that I may see,
Through all the radiance of the skies
That soul which liv'd for me !

Proem.

FORBEAR to wonder whence this rhyme hath sprung,

And think of *him* for whom alone 'twas sung :
Not mine the pride, or hope, to hold the Nine,
Nor gather laurels at the Muses' shrine.

Like ill-made wine, my verses here declare
Their flagrant faults, and show my want of care :
I've learn'd to linger in my hidden cell,
And live to worship, where I cannot dwell :
This once I dip in Helicon's bright wave,
And, for *his* sake, some inspiration crave ;
If ought can catch thy ear, convey one glow,
His the warmth, and his the inspiring flow :
If in these leaves, some beauties chance to shine,
Each rose is his, the thorns alone are mine.

A Song of Friendship.

Is this the face I knew—the man I loved ?
And this the heart in faithful friendship proved ?
Is this the brow, once thought's resplendent throne,
Whence life's bright angel has forever flown ?
Are these wan lips and pallid cheeks the same
I knew, once radiant with the spirit's flame ?
Are these composed limbs, this silent breast,
This deathless image of immortal rest,
The last of earth, for him who bore such sway,
Through love and gentle deeds, but yesterday ?

The sculptor's hand can give to stone such light
Of spirit-beauty, with its plastic might,
That the insensate marble seems to feel
An intuition of some high ideal :
Yet here, Oh Sculptor Death ! how dim the trace
Of the sweet soul upon the marble face ?
I gaze upon this tenantless abode,
In self-beguiling thought, as though the load

Of death might pass, and he again arise,
And, smiling, greet me with love-answering eyes !
Not so, ah me ! The friend I lov'd is dead !
Gone, like the breeze upon the waters sped—
A light extinguish'd, a receding wave,
A hymn that sounds no more along the nave !

What purblind Fury cut the golden thread
That held thy life, and gave thee to the dead,
I will not seek to know : but, let it rest
With Him alone who doeth all things best.
How oft a life goes out as some torch blown
By the rude winds, but to the good God known !
Ah ! if in some glass 'twas given to see
The archer Death, who tracks us ceaselessly,
Then would we know how near, in life's high bloom,
The shaft is veil'd which marks us for the tomb !

Like Antony, I plead for my dead friend,
And sum his virtues !—Do I need defend ?
I pray to speak that sermon never said
Above the dust of the unsullied dead :
No longer now shall duty's hand be stay'd,
And leave my debt to gentle Carl unpaid.

I cannot soar to where he sings to-day,
Nor catch the songs which round his spirit play ;
But here one lowly flow'r, touch'd by a tear,
My heart would lay on his lamented bier !

There is no light which on our friends may shine,
As from their grave, that light which is divine ;
Remember'd graces from our hearts arise,
And beautify the dead to living eyes :
And hidden buds of beauty break their bloom,
Warm'd by that light which consecrates a tomb !
Some find, too late, how virtue can adorn
A friend, when lost ; then all admire and mourn.
The world is slow to find the proper rate,—
'Tis death alone that gives a man his weight ;
And, then, alas, contrition will appear,
By heaping flowers on his silent bier.

One day I wander'd in the field of death,
His tomb I saw, thence came a tuneful breath :
The sun was gone; far to the west descends
A glorious day ;—like him, its journey ends ;
Thus then I wrote, and wrote with tender pain,
These lines, which on that tomb should erst remain :

“ This modest marble boldly fronts the skies,
For 'neath this stone an honest man now lies:
Honest in life, this world was all at ease,
Honest in all, he view'd the next in peace:
Pure in his heart, sincere in all his ways,
Him to have known, was thence to speak his praise;
Soft his honors, not widely known to fame,
For modest virtues do not themselves proclaim:
He liv'd his life, till life itself was gone,
Then dar'd to die, while worthless men live on:
Envy itself could not his life pursue,
Or show one fault, or showing, prove it true:
To make men happy was his constant strife:
He gave to love, 'twas all he could, his life:
This blameless man hath left a kingly dust,
His soul is housed with all the good and just:
He sleeps for aye on Honor's noble bed:
Pause with respect as by his dust you tread.”

Here let the roses bloom, the daisies spring,
The bright birds warble, and the Muses sing:
Here matted myrtle weave its tangled hair,
And ivy twine in soft affection there:
Here maidens come, and here strong hearts may yield
Their rapt devotion, in this verdant field:

Here Nature mourn, dissolve herself in showers,
To nurse this turf and wrap his grave in flowers :
In russet robes rich Autumn shall appear,
To cast its honors on his silent bier :
Here verdure gone, and Autumn's glory lost,
These groves shall glitter with their silver frost ;
Here Winter, cold, shall sift her frozen cloud,
While icy fingers weave the spotless shroud ;
This stone itself, its dumb compassion show,
And stand, like Niobe, a sign of woe :
Here sob the night-winds in their mournful wars,
Here fall the sparkle of a thousand stars ;
Here Evening brown, her dusky braids shall twine,
And star-light kiss that breathless sleep of thine :
Here drop the tear from friendship's dewy eyes,
Here tender love, shall pour distressful sighs :
For here sleeps one, who, all unknown to fame,
Had every virtue which adorns a name !

Thine was the bloom of cultivated mind,
With the rich perfume of the heart combin'd :
Stamp'd with the seal of that unconscious grace,
Which wins our favor like an angel's face.

A manly presence, joined to manners mild,
Thy smile still lingers as it oft beguil'd :
Lord of that wondrous and magnetic art
Which steals, like sunlight, into every heart,
Thou had'st the spirit's blithe, abounding grace,
And Courtesy made with thee its dwelling place.
As the transmuting sun salutes the vine,
Warming the acrid juice to rosy wine,
With such a pow'r thy genial soul was rife,
And stole into the very crypts of life !

What aims were thine ? What dreams did you pursue ?
What were thy hopes !—the food on which they grew ?
Fame had no phantom on her mountain's brow,
Which won thy eye, or call'd a deathless vow ;
Gold had no charms to make a selfish man,
Or turn thy heart from life's heroic plan :
Honest to gain, not prodigal to waste,
But money made the servitor of taste :
Slave to no vice, held by no pleasure's thrall,
Thy equal mind survey'd the good in all.
Your light was true, your moral sense was strong,
You knew the certain bounds of Right and Wrong :
Generous in faith, liberal in view,
Yet Truth's unmerring line you still pursue :

With the bee's catholicity of taste,
You sip'd your sweets from off the world's wide waste.
As doth the charioteer, with skillful hand,
Urge or restrain the steeds at his command,
So thou thy passions held within control,
Or bade them drive thee to the destin'd goal.
Broad as the race thy love of liberty,
And every man a brother found in thee :
The pen that wrote Ben Adhem's loving name,
That pen shall write thee, in that book the same.
Though born beyond the seas, thy heart and hand
Were plighted here, as to thy native land ;
And never sank a worthier son to rest,
Upon the broad republic's verdur'd breast !

What ere there is which all good men admire,
Met in your mould and mingled with your fire :
Blest with a heart from which no gall could flow,
You never made one honest man your foe !
So mild, yet firm ; so soft and yet so strong,
Frank to confess as to avoid the wrong.
Patron of art, to lib'ral learning wed.
While music all thy softer nature fed ;
Few ever knew how studious thy mind,—
Lover of books, to culture so inclin'd.

Thy word a bond, more in itself than gold,
For honor's worth has never yet been told :
Not to be known, no wish to be admired,
No noisy honors were by thee desired :
Held by some plan, nor careless of a day,
You did not whirl this little life away.
Pleas'd with a tranquil hour, thy years did flow :
No wish to soar, you never sunk too low.
What faults were thine I never well could see,—
Some grace appear'd when ere I turn'd to thee.

Thus was my friend, whom Nature's mould had made
So to herself, that naught could him upbraid :
So equal he, so round in every part,
A circle true his character and heart.
He stood beside us in his manhood here,
Posed like Apollo in the Belvedere ;
And all good hearts their sorrows here can shed,
And drop such tears as do embalm the dead !

Thy firm, unshaken soul, believed the day
Would be, when Truth and Right would come to stay ;
When Justice pure, and Reason's temper'd art,
Should sway the mind and move the public heart ;

That Hope's sweet promise, with its purple gleam,
Shall never fade, as fades some splendid dream:
When Peace her trophies rear, and War shall rest,
Or Valor bleed for that alone the best;
When public Fraud shall hide its shameful face,
And Honor rise to take the vacant place :
The patient years which God to Faith hath lent,
Will build for aye, Right's starry monument !
And such as thou are heralds of the day,—
Lances of light which round the Morning play !

With the enthronèd gods, you held the key
That opes to vision grander things to see :
The better mind to higher thoughts will rise,
As to Olympus, all gods lift their eyes ;
The mountain peaks, where lights eternal glow,
While lofty natures catch the beams they show ;
They seize the light which gilds the future day,
And, like to gods, they roll it on its way !
The slower world is as the valleys green,—
The hills awake, and then the vales between.

True friendship comes not like a summer's day,
To please but once, then gently pass away;

It comes and grows, through each confiding year,
As rings concentric in the tree appear :
Born in some genial season's happy prime,
It ripens only with the tests of time.
It thrills with joy, but never thrills alone,
And warmly sighs for sorrows not its own :
A winter fruit, it stoutly fights decay,
And sweeter grows as years do pass away.
But yet, beware in whom you best confide !
For human hearts have all an ocean tide ;
And stormy passions move the softest breast,—
Capricious sea on which to hope for rest.
'Tis more sincere in childhood's early years :
But men grow fickle with maturer years ;
Cold interest comes with all our acts to blend,
Grown selfish now, we can betray a friend !
For faithless ones, prepare an aching heart,
Or, cold yourself, receive a pangless dart.
Some love you lightly, and their day is brief,
They smile on all, but have no tears for grief.
And yet there are, I care not what beside,
There are true hearts, to faithful hearts allied !
And thou, my friend, did every doubt dispel,
And teach that faith that proved itself so well ;

Thy constant heart, in every friendship tried,
Gave but one grief, and that was when you died.
When such are gone, alas, the life of man
Is far too short, to find such friends again !
The void is fill'd with shining immortelles,
Where mem'ry rings her sweet and magic bells !

Of virtues cardinal, I most incline
To Friendship : it is that roseate wine,
Which, as it flows, doth never fire the brain,
Nor leave upon the soul one marring stain :
It warms our grief, as if the mid-night skies
Should open wide, and let the day arise !
It brings a balm upon the viewless air,
And smooth'st the furrows on the brow of care ;
A protest sweet that men, at heart, are good,
And links us, kinsmen, to the throne of God !

O harmony of heart, and happy mind,
By music softened, and by love refined !
From what rare filaments those nerves were spun,
So tun'd to every tender touch and tone !
So silken-soft, so flexible and warm,
Selectest nature's paragon and charm !

Music and love ! Ye most propitious pair
Which fill with joy our life's disquiet air !
Not passing strange the magic violin,
That voic'd thy soul, another soul should win !
Some rare enchantment lurk'd within that bow,
For twice it brought your wedding day, you know !
As fair Apollo with his golden lyre,
You show'd its rapture, as you felt its fire.
I see you skirmish now, on every string,
Ere to the full measure you give swift wing :
Then comes that torrent, when each note and trill
Of ringing sweetness, shows the master's skill !
Ah, my sweet friend, somewhere in music's skies,
'Tis yours to-day to take a victor's prize :
Joining, perchance, with Saint Cecelia's lyre,
In choral song amid some angel-quire :
Or singing symphonies with Beethoven,
Amid the resounding groves of Heaven !

Home, the mother of joy, the eye of love—
A spring pure-watered from a stream above :
To that sweet haven you did oft repair,
To taste its charms and breathe its heavenly air.

If by the world you felt your heart was stain'd,
You found in home your "Paradise Regain'd ;"
If toil, or trouble, left on thee its trace,
Home was the hand that could that care efface ;
All shadows here did melt in perfect day,—
Here cares took wing and lightly flew away.

Wealth holds us now—ambition bids us roam,—
Return, O heart, to the sweet shrine of home !
There are the roses, wash'd with morning dew,—
There are the skies, clearer than Syrian blue :
There are the smiles to light the face of Care,—
There thy babes, with ripples of golden hair ;—
Young Auroras, around *her* knees they play :
She, the flower that bloomed for thee in May !
O, who but loves the daisied walks of home,
For Virtue springs beneath her golden dome !
There is the top of earth ; Jove hath no power
To make for man a more enchanting bower !
If men would rev'rence more that holy shrine,
They'd find one pow'r that made thy life divine.

Now come those frosts which these fair lands
invade,
To bind in frozen fetters, stream and glade ;

The woods are spread with silent tents of snow,
And verdant prairies loose their pictur'd glow :
'Neath icy paths, the Mississippi's moan
Is heard to murmur through a frozen zone :
Clos'd then the door, and bright the evening fire,
When two fond hearts were touch'd with Attic fire !

First treasur'd books were brought, those golden urns
Wherein the quenchless flame of genius burns :
In Doric mood, we sound the lofty verse,
And each to each, some mighty lines rehearse :
List to the organ tones of Goethe's voice,
Or now, from Schiller make a charming choice :
Perhaps in story, or in song's delight,
Or converse sweet, we pass the livelong night :
In kingly sport, in solemn argument,
Or youth-nurs'd dreams, betimes, grow eloquent ;
On modern morals oft, we drew the blade :
Or in theology, took masquerade :
Perchance some vintage of the far-off Rhine,
Mellow'd by age, like that Falernian wine
Which Horace drank with the great Macenas,
Bubbl'd bright in amber waves between us !
(But if to pleasure thus we risk'd the bowl,
We ever held it in discreet control :)

This well I know, we did discourse high themes,
And slake our souls at life's immortal streams !

And now no longer comes my Grecian friend,
In high dispute, a sullen day to end :
The winter sharp, is doubly now a-cold,
And dead delights tell how the heart grows old :
No more those grand repasts, with Attic fire !
No more those dreams which all good hearts inspire !
That cheerful hour, Heaven has put away,
And I must reck my life some other way.
But yet rejoice ! my friend, he is not dead,
Like Lycidas, he lifts his drooping head,
“ And tricks his beams ” in some new fountain high,
And “ flames in th’ forehead of the morning sky : ”
His lordly life went out with calm content :
On glory’s hills he pitches now his tent :
The lusty passions of this wayward world,
Like captur’d flags, around his feet are furl’d !
O noble heart ! arise ! teach me the ways
That gave you strength, and won enduring praise !

Why seek you now this rest of endless night,
When all the world is fresh with new delight ?

Return, Alcestis-like, though pale and spent,
Return, and bring us measureless content !
Let villains die and meet their promis'd doom,
But live, my friend ! for thee the world has room !
How could you go into the wastes of time,
Ere thy true life had touch'd its noon and prime ?
No head 's mature, till yet one good grey hair
Has, graceful, rear'd its silver banner there !
O Carl ! could'st thou liv'd past Werther, then
Better than Faust indeed you would have been !
Does virtue breed contagion for the grave,
Nor Death respect a soul so truly brave ?
Oh cruel Death ! how could'st thou bate thy greed,
On such a life—on such a true heart feed ?
Some die, whom all the world could wish might live :
Some live, whom dead, the world would then forgive :
But thou, my friend ! we all at last beheld
The rich material, which, in thee excell'd :
If thus such promise when your life began,
How years would prove the measure of the man !
Perchance we lov'd too much, and hence, that day,
To envious gods he fell, a charming prey !
Perchance they snatch'd him from that morning's
mead,
To make for them another Ganymede !

Or sure of Heaven, his undaunted soul
Dared of itself to take supreme control :
And Moses-like, he sought to shun delay,
And passing Time, to mount the Heav'nly way !

They who write skeptic on thy grave, can know
But little of the heart now cold below.

The shaft we wing our neighbors to reprove,
May miss the vulture and condemn the dove :
In such decrees and dooms as thus we scan,
We turn to Heav'n in our appeal from man !
How near, indeed, to God a soul must be,
Possessed of Honor, Truth and Purity ?
These are the angels which protect my friend,
Bloom'd in his life, and on his steps attend.

Strong minds from creeds have ever yet been free,
As mighty riv'rs march untram'l'd to the sea.
By conduct, not by creeds, good men are made :
Though church and code may prove to some an aid,
Christ's holy thought is not inclos'd in walls :
On men who know it not, His splendor falls !
After that perfect image, grand and true,
Good hearts will ever mould themselves anew !

Show me one earnest man without his doubt—
Unsought distrust—that ebbing in and out
Of the soul, ocean-like, feeling the shore
It comes to kiss, then backward in its roar !
The conscience surely will indict, or free
Each man, whatever else may be his plea :
A perfect creed has never yet been found,—
'Tis just beyond, like some enchanted ground.
When, with our judgment best, we do believe,
When our own conscience, we do not deceive,—
If but your action with your faith combine,
No oracle can shake your base divine !
Foe to no faith, I only bid you scan
His real worth—the motives of the man !
His life so pure, and truth so well he wore,
That all could praise, and Christians well adore :
The quiet conscience of a life well spent,
Calm'd every thought, and gave his heart content :
Not for himself his time alone employs,
But aids the world to find its noblest joys !
To soften grief, to temper human woe,
To make men better, and to keep them so :
To clothe the poor, to make the hungry glad :
To plant a joy within some bosom, sad :

Wept by his friends—no foes to be forgiven—
What cruel creed could keep his soul from Heaven ?
Such was my friend ; how dare you such despise,
Or keep his soul one moment from the skies !

This verse was thine, and yet by fate's decree,
Another heart is here deplored by me :
You knew her well—in trusting friendship tried ;—
Your bride and mine the grave did not divide.
In that fair morn, where lingers still the heart,
What by-gone scenes to conscious beauty start ?
I backward tread the paths of early years,
And see one form amid my blinding tears !
Her face was writ on beauty's splendid shield,
Her eyes were soft, her lips were rich vermeil'd ;
Her heart was as a rose whose fragrant breath
Was sweet in life, and sweeter yet in death :
Her bosom, white, so saint-like and so warm,
My Eden fair in sunshine and in storm.
That life was mine ; its ever bright control
Subdues to her the temper of my soul :
Calm and serene, that more than mortal shape
Attends my steps, nor can her thought escape.

Time softens love ; but love ! it is not fled,—
It quickens now around the beauteous dead !
If in some shade I, pensive, seek for rest,
I hear soft whispers from her gentle breast :
If in some book, I seek release from care,
I find some thought which tells me she is there :
While in my dreams, trac'd on the mid-night air,
I feel the rustling of her spirit there :
White as a thought of Heav'n, behold she stands !
Rose-bloom on her face, twilight on her hands !
Fresh from Paradise, with its glory drest,
She, like a moonbeam, falls on my sweet rest !
Thus, in the loom of life, the hidden thread
Will weave the face of one we lov'd, when dead.

Whence were the fountains of that exalted life,
Which mould the mother, and which warm the wife ?
Whence came that grace, those dear affections mild,
The woman's strength, the gladness of a child ?
Thy art was nature : thence that beauty springs,
Which far excels the bluer blood of kings !

Her judgment sways, and yet her spirit warms,—
Her grace excels, and every virtue charms :

Nature gave her the happy art to please,
For she was born to win all hearts with ease :
Bless'd with sober sense, toys to her were naught,
Which vex the vain, and by the vain are sought :
Nor rich, nor poor, yet with her lot content,
Life was a joy, and every day well spent :
And thus she lived, so innocently gay,
While new-born graces bloom'd from day to day :
And thus she died before our swimming eyes,
And, like an angel, stept into the skies !
And for her death the birds might cease to sing,
And flowers forget the coming of the Spring ;
Or blossoms fade, or stars neglect to shine,
For she has perished—she so near divine !
Ah ! thou did'st die, to set our hearts on fire
For Heav'n, that unto it we might aspire,
And scorn a world no longer trod by thee,
Whose radiant feet in fairer fields are free !

O kindred soul ! not dimly now I see
The dead which are, or those which are to be :
I seem to touch, as in some living dream,
The very soul whose form doth softly gleam !

These shades ! They are not phantom's of the brain,
So warm, so fresh, like flowers after rain !
Their hands I feel ! and now their balmy breath !
Can this be life ? or yet can this be death ?
And now, we trembling, fear to move or speak :
The dream may change—the spell itself may break ;
For, like the rainbow, these fair forms arise
To elude our grasp and vanish in the skies !

The loving gods, when some dear soul they prize,
Would lift him, honored, to the starry skies :
As when Astrea mounts the glittering height,
And Justice shines along the radiant night :
Or Vesper, rising on his golden car,
He flames forever as the Evening Star ;
Or Leda's sons, they mark the heavenly will,
And all the night with orient lustre fill :
Perchance great Jove, enamor'd of my friend,
With other stars his purple light shall blend ;
And oft to Heaven I lift my searching eyes,
For some new star to next suffuse the skies,—
Some rosy orb, which, late repenting Fate,
Has giv'n to Vesper as a golden mate.

When round thy cradle all the gods did tend,
Each with his gift, to make the future friend,
Then came the Graces, and enwreath'd thy heart
With all their gifts—and, hence, so dear thou art !

Proud are the stones where royal ashes sleep,
And marble angels over heroes, weep,
And lofty shafts spring o'er the mould'ring bone
Of wealth, which never held a heart its own ;
Thus sleep the proud, who never felt the glow
Of honest sympathy for human woe !

But loving hands on more than stone shall trace
Thy image fair, with all its knightly grace ;
Thy virtues spread, not to the open skies,
But in our hearts thy graven glory lies !

Woe has its pomp where sleeps exalted birth ;—
Tears are the nobler urns of real worth !
And all who rev'rence such, will shed a tear
On Honor's grave, for it lies buried here !

Ye flowers fair, which in the vales do grow,
The purple pansy, and the violet's glow,
The rose's beauty, and the lilly's snow,
The creeping myrtle, with its leaves of green,
And every pensive flower that ere was seen,

Come hither ! pour your honey'd cups of tears,
And swell the tribute which our Carl deserves !

How ancient heroes won their fame, and glow'd
In matchless song, through each Pindaric ode,
We read, amaz'd ; for glory's chaplet rests
On muscles' might, and wrestlers' panting breasts ;
'Twas dauntless strength then led the path to fame,
And genius gave to manly mould a name :
And Homer's heroes, round the walls of Troy
They slaughter men—they know no higher joy ;
Or Milton soils his angels now with crime,
And plumes his seraphs for a war sublime ;
Let plumes and helms from every head be torn,
And man arise to greet a better morn !
For man's best song should not ring out for blood,
And blazon wrong for ever like a flood !
For honest worth, unsullied by a sear,
Come lift its fame unto the morning star !
We sing the citizen whom worth doth praise,
And pour the tribute of admiring lays
On Virtue's son : we give our judgment there—
Then deathless friend accept the wreath I bear !

Had I the pow'r to verse thy praise aright,
I'd toss thy name to glory's lasting height !
Bequeath red battle to the sunset skies,
And, on the golden dawn, thy fame should rise !
For one true heart, its story rightly told,
Would give the world a poem wrought in gold !

With mingl'd dies we now our friends design,
And on the canvas would their grace combine.
'Tis fancy brings the vanish'd form to view,
And thus alone we build our friends anew.
What art can catch the beauty of the soul,
Or fix illusive thought, which crowns the whole ?
A something still which every pow'r defies,
Eludes the touch, and, like a shadow, flies.
The canvas oft but gives the changeless face,
To pall the sense with unvarying grace :
A thousand looms do ply their shuttles grand,
To deck a soul that does the world command ;
These mingled threads which, with the flowers vie,
Embroider shades which every art defy.
How little of thyself the pencil gives :
One touch of soul—there all the rapture lives !

Yet there is one, in whose fair breast the fire
Of love for him, can but with life expire :
Love touch'd by grief all other loves survive,
The rest may die, but sorrow's love will live :
Nor time, nor change, cannot the thought restrain,
Nor tears be taught that tears do flow in vain.
His passing love you knew, his tender thought,
The wining ways by which he ever wrought ;
If to his worth I cannot build the rhyme,
Thy tender heart will pardon me the crime.
My lady fair, your love was like the rose,
Which, to the suitor sun, doth all unclose,
And pours its fragrance on the balmy air,
Breathing the regal warmth which kiss'd it, there ;
So thou to him did turn your timid heart,
Warm'd by his love, a richer love impart :
Till now, full grown, does each perfected grace
Bloom in your heart, and smile upon your face !

And now, my song, go thou to each good heart
That Virtue loves, and there his flame impart :
Have we not stray'd, as in some garden fair,
With fruit and blossom shining everywhere ?
For he was one whose soul was dipp'd in light,
Like some clear star—the diamond of the night :

Now like a bird, he soars to sunny skies,
And all forsakes this wintry world, and dies !
His life was like some priestly office given
To scatter gladness from the gates of Heav'n !
His life was like some splendid summer day,—
Himself a summer in his genial way :
The kingly seal of Truth was in his thought :
And wine of love in all the ways he wrought :
A type of man upon whose cheerful face,
You saw the banner of a conquering grace.
How sweet his presence in the social air !
The rose is gone—its fragrance still is there !
That sparkling soul that beam'd on all around,—
His very haunts are turn'd to classic ground !
Pray, reader, pause, and learn true honor here,
Such souls are rare as that which doth appear :
And join these rhythmic lines, well pleas'd to find,
We clasp a hand his worth hath left behind !

Thy life and love have pass'd, like Summer, by ;
Those dazzling dreams now with the roses lie :
I stand upon the future's ocean shore,
And list the dip of thy remember'd oar :
I shade my eyes, and far along the wave
I see the silver wake thy bark did leave :

A mystic azure veils that flying sail,
Filled with the breath of Death's remorseless gale ;
Now far along that dark and distant sea,
That bark is lost, alas, for love and me !

But yet again that perfum'd sail shall rise,
With beaming brightness, under better skies ;
Thy purple pennon shall unfold its bars
Beneath the splendor of eternal stars !
And lips long dead, shall welcome kisses wave,
To greet thy coming o'er the crested wave !

I've writ my rhyme, my minstrel's task is done,—
Smile now, my friend, and then my prize is won !

Sonnet.

H Friend, beloved and brother of my soul !
By the dear God, to me, in darkness sent,
A light to cheer me, when mine own was spent,
Now lost so soon, and yet so wide the goal,
Oh heart, as constant as the steadfast pole !
Whose spell, like thine, had such a blandishment
To sooth a sorrow to a sweet content,
Or every turbulence of ill control,
And make a Paradise on earth for men ?
Not thou, but grief be dead. If in me lives
A spark of that divinity that gives
An inspiration to the poet's pen
Immortally, in this, as in these leaves
Live on good heart to other times again !

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